

Message from Gov. James B. Hunt and Gov. James G. Martin *Co-Chairs, Strategic Plan Steering Committee*

When the North Carolina Biotechnology Center was created in 1981, it was the first state-supported biotechnology initiative in the world. No other state or country has established such a comprehensive and effective model to stimulate biotechnology development. As a result, North Carolina has emerged as a leading place for biotechnology growth and development, creating jobs and improving our quality of life.

Now, more than 20 years later and with biotechnology growing at a more rapid pace than ever, we have put together a strategic plan to guide us through the next 20 years, with the ultimate goal of having 125,000 biotechnology-related jobs by 2023. To achieve this goal, we must get down to business fast by implementing the strategies in this plan. Strong cooperation among government, business, and academia is required to sustain the momentum that has put North Carolina among the nation's top five biotechnology states. We must continue to recruit new companies, expand existing companies, and encourage spinouts from companies and universities, and we must accelerate the pace at which we do so. We are fortunate in North Carolina to have the ability to implement all of these efforts in all parts of the state. Biotechnology applications in North Carolina's main industries — agriculture, health care, environmental sciences, forestry, and many others — are already spreading biotechnology beyond Research Triangle Park and into other areas of the state.

North Carolina has all of the essential ingredients for success, including top-ranked universities and community colleges, a capable work force, and a high quality of life. We will continue to rely on these strengths to attract biotechnology companies to our state, but we must enhance them even further and be creative and innovative in meeting the competitive challenge. We already have a great foundation on which to build.

We are at a competitive crossroads with many other states looking to recruit biotechnology companies. In this critical time, we must find the resources needed to implement this strategic plan effectively and efficiently to make sure that North Carolina is the most attractive state for companies looking to locate or expand. We have the potential to create thousands of new jobs in every part of North Carolina by applying these strategies.

Ever since the Wright Brothers made their historic flight at Kitty Hawk in 1903, North Carolina has been a leader in technology. One hundred years later, North Carolina is still cultivating that visionary spirit. As we celebrate being "First in Flight," let us also strive to be first in biotechnology.

— *The Honorable James B. Hunt, Jr.*
Womble Carlyle Sandridge
& Rice, PLLC

— *The Honorable James G. Martin*
Corporate Vice President
Carolinas HealthCare System